

Edlund, Carl

From: Irizarry, Gilberto
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 11:58 AM
To: Feldt, Lisa
Cc: Stanislaus, Mathy; Breen, Barry; Tulis, Dana; Stanton, Larry; Coleman, Sam; Edlund, Carl; Phillips, Pam; Broyles, Ragan; Webster, Susan; EOC EPAHQ
Subject: Re: West Fertilizer, Inc, Explosion in West, Texas

Here's a slightly revised version of what I forwarded below a few minutes ago. 30 ppm we now believe to be a better number to reference as a level above which exposures could/would result in notable discomfort/irritation.

West Fertilizer, Inc, Explosion in West, Texas

Around midnight, CDT on April 17, EPA's Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology (ASPECT) aircraft flew 21 runs over the incident site; data on the plume was available within 5 minutes. Readings were 6 to 10 part per million (ppm) by volume ammonia concentration within the plume, however, the plume dissipated rapidly due to high winds. Approximately ½ mile downwind, during the same runs, ASPECT did not detect ammonia.

People exposed to levels of ammonia above 30 ppm could experience notable discomfort or irritation. Ammonia is extremely pungent and inhaling ammonia can cause rapid onset of burning sensation in the eyes, nose and throat, but no lasting harm.

ASPECT is currently awaiting clearance to fly missions today. At the moment, the weather is poor. When they do fly today, they will be collecting photographic data as well as collecting additional data from the plume.

E-mail from Blackberry. Please excuse typos.

Gilberto "Tito" Irizarry, Director
Program Operations & Coordination Division
Office of Emergency Management
O: 202-564-7982
C: 202-821-8138

From: Irizarry, Gilberto
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 12:15:17 PM
To: Feldt, Lisa
Cc: Stanislaus, Mathy; Breen, Barry; Tulis, Dana; Stanton, Larry; Coleman, Sam; Edlund, Carl; Phillips, Pam; Broyles, Ragan; Webster, Susan
Subject: West Fertilizer, Inc, Explosion in West, Texas

Lisa:

Circling back on question(s) about ammonia detection at the incident scene and what would be levels of concern the information below was developed by our HQ EOC folks and circulated through the R6 REOC personnel.

Gilberto "Tito" Irizarry
Program Operations & Coordination Division, Director

Office of Emergency Management
US Environmental Protection Agency, Headquarters
Tel: (202) 564-7982
Mobile: (202) 821-8138
Fax: (202) 564-8333

West Fertilizer, Inc, Explosion in West, Texas

Around midnight, CDT on April 17, EPA's Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology (ASPECT) aircraft flew 21 runs over the incident site; data on the plume was available within 5 minutes. Readings were 6 to 10 ppm ammonia concentration within the plume, however, the plume dissipated rapidly due to high winds. Approximately ½ mile downwind, during the same runs, ASPECT did not detect ammonia.

People exposed to levels of ammonia up to 100 ppm are likely to experience significant irritation to their eyes, nose and throat, but no lasting harm. Ammonia is extremely pungent and may be immediately sensed at levels far below 100 ppm.

ASPECT is currently awaiting clearance to fly missions today. At the moment, the weather is poor. When they do fly today, they will be collecting photographic data as well as collecting additional data from the plume.